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TO THE HOMES OF

Great Reformers

Thomas Paine

Written by Elbert Hubbard and done into a Printed Book by The Roycrofters at their Shop which is in East Aurora, Erie Co., New York

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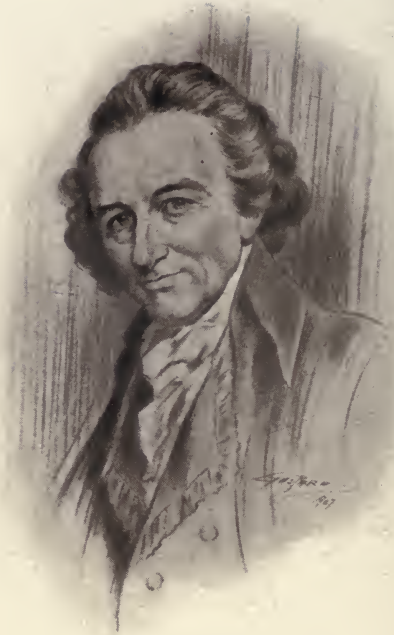

Thomas Paine

THOMAS PAINE

THESE are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will in this crisis shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it NOW, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly; 'tis dearness only that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed, if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated.

—THE CRISIS

V2H

GREAT REFORMERS

HOMAS PAINE was an English mechanic, of Quaker origin, born in the year 1737. He was the author of four books that have influenced mankind profoundly. These books are, "Common Sense," "The Age of Reason," "The Crisis," and "The Rights of Man."

In 1774, when he was thirty-seven years old he came to America bearing letters of introduction from Benjamin Franklin.

On arriving at Philadelphia he soon found work as editor of "The Pennsylvania Magazine."

In 1775, in the magazine just named, he openly advocated, and prophesied a speedy separation of the American Colonies from England. He also threw a purple shadow over his popularity by declaring his abhorrence of chattel slavery.

His writings, from the first, commanded a profound attention, and on the advice and suggestion of Dr. Benjamin Rush, an eminent citizen of Philadelphia, the scattered editorials and paragraphs on human rights, covering a year, were gathered, condensed, revised, made into a book.

This "pamphlet," or paper-bound book, was called "Common Sense."

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In France, John Adams was accused of writing "Common Sense." He stoutly denied it, there being several allusions in it stronger than he cared to stand sponsor for ❧ ❧

In England, Franklin was accused of being the author, and he neither denied nor admitted it. But when a lady reproached him for having used the fine alliterative phrase, applied to the king, "That Royal British Brute," he smiled and said blandly, "Madame, I would never have been as disrespectful to the brute creation as that."

¶ "Common Sense" struck the keynote of popular feeling, and the accusation of "treason," hurled at it from many sources, only served to advertise it ❧ It supplied the common people with reasons, and gave statesmen arguments. The legislature of Pennsylvania voted Paine an honorarium of five hundred pounds, and the University of Pennsylvania awarded him the degree of "Master of Arts," in recognition of eminent services to literature and human rights. John Quincy Adams said, "Paine's pamphlet, 'Common Sense,' crystallized public opinion and was the first factor in bringing about the Revolution."

Rev. Theodore Parker once said, "Every living man in America in 1776, who could read, read 'Common Sense,' by Thomas Paine. If he were a Tory, he read it, at least a little, just to find out for himself how atrocious it was; and if he was a Whig, he read it all to find the reasons why he was one. This book was the

arsenal to which colonists went for their mental weapons."

As "Common Sense" was published anonymously and without copyright, and was circulated at bare cost, Paine never received anything for the work, save the twenty-five hundred dollars voted to him by the legislature.

When independence was declared, Paine enlisted as a private, but was soon made aide-de-camp to General Greene. He was an intrepid and effective soldier and took an active part in various battles.

In December 1776 he published his second book, "The Crisis," the first words of which have gone into the electrotype of human speech, "These are the times that try men's souls." The intent of the letters which make up "The Crisis" was to infuse courage into the sinking spirits of the soldiers ✍ Washington ordered the letters to be read at the head of every regiment, and it was so done.

In 1781 Paine was sent to France with Col. Laurens to negotiate a loan ✍ The errand was successful, and Paine then made influential acquaintances, which were later to be renewed. He organized the Bank of North America to raise money to feed and clothe the army, and performed sundry and various services for the Colonies.

In 1791 he published his third book, "The Rights of Man," with a complimentary preface by Thomas Jef-

ferson. The book had an immense circulation in America and England. By way of left-handed recognition of the work, the author was indicted by the British Government for "sedition." A day was set for the trial but as Paine did not appear,—those were hanging days—and could not be found, he was outlawed and "banished forever."

He became a member of the French Assembly, or "Chamber of Deputies," and for voting against the death of the king, came under suspicion, and was imprisoned for one year, lacking a few weeks. His life was saved by James Monroe, America's minister to France, and for eighteen months he was a member of Monroe's household.

In 1794 while in France, there was published simultaneously in England, America and France, Paine's fourth book, "The Age of Reason."

In 1802 Thomas Jefferson, then president of the United States, offered Paine passage to America on board the man-of-war "Maryland," in order that he might be safe from capture by the English who had him under constant surveillance, and were intent on his arrest, regarding him as the chief instigator in the American Rebellion. Arriving in America, Paine was the guest for several months of the president at Monticello. His admirers in Baltimore, Washington, Philadelphia and New York gave banquets in his honor, and he was tendered grateful recognition on account of his services

to humanity and his varied talents. He was presented by the State of New York "in token of heroic work for the Union," a farm at New Rochelle, eighteen miles from New York, and here he lived in comparative ease, writing and farming.

He passed peacefully away, aged seventy-two in 1809, and his body was buried on his farm, near the house where he lived, and a modest monument erected marking the spot. He had no Christian burial, although unlike Mr. Zangwill, he had a Christian name. Nine years after the death of Paine, William Cobbett, the eminent English reformer, stung by the obloquy visited upon the memory of Paine in America, had the grave opened and the bones of the man who wrote the first draft of our Declaration of Independence, were removed to England, and buried near the spot where he was born. Death having silenced both the tongue and pen of the Thetford weaver, no violent interference was offered by the British government. So now the dead man slept where the presence of the living one was barred and forbidden. A modest monument marks the spot. Beneath the name are these words, "The world is my country, mankind are my friends, to do good is my religion."

In 1839 a monument was erected at New Rochelle, New York, on the site of the empty grave where the body of Paine was first buried, by the lovers and admirers of the man. And while only one land claims his

birthplace, three countries dispute for the privilege of honoring his dust, for in France there is now a strong movement demanding that the remains of Thomas Paine be removed from England to France, and be placed in the Pantheon, that resting place of so many of the illustrious dead who gave their lives to the cause of Freedom, close by the graves of Voltaire, Rousseau and Victor Hugo. And the reason the bones were not removed to Paris, was because only an empty coffin rests in the grave at Thetford, as at New Rochelle. Rumor says that Paine's skull is in a London museum, but if so, the head that produced "The Age of Reason" cannot be identified. And the end is not yet!

HE genius of Paine was a flower that blossomed slowly. But life is a sequence and the man who does great work has been in training for it. There is nothing like keeping in condition, one does not know when he is going to be called upon. Prepared people do not have to hunt for a position—the position hunts for them. Paine knew no more about what he was getting ready for than did Benjamin Franklin,

when at twenty he studied French, evenings, and dived deep into history.

The humble origin of Paine and his Quaker ancestry were most helpful factors in his career. Only a working man who had tasted hardship could sympathize with the over-taxed and oppressed. And Quakerdom made him a rebel by pre-natal tendency. Paine's schooling was slight but his parents, though poor, were thinking people, for nothing sharpens the wits of men, preventing fatty degeneration of the cerebrum, like persecution ✍ In this respect the Jews and Quakers have been greatly blessed and benefited—let us congratulate them. Very early in life Paine acquired the study habit ✍ And for the youth who has the study habit no pedagogic tears need be shed. There were debating clubs at coffee-houses where great themes were discussed; and our young weaver began his career by defending the Quakers. He acquired considerable local reputation as a weaver of thoughts upon the warp and woof of words. Occasionally he occupied the pulpit in dissenting chapels.

These were great times in England—the air was all a-throb with thought and feeling. A great tidal wave of unrest swept the land. It was an epoch of growth, second only in history to the Italian Renaissance. The two Wesleys were attacking the church and calling upon men to methodize their lives and eliminate folly; Gibbon was writing his "Decline and Fall;" Burke,

in the House of Commons, was polishing his brogue; Boswell was busy blithering about a book concerning a man; Captain Cook was sailing the seas finding continents; the two Pitts and Charles Fox were giving the king unpalatable advice; Horace Walpole was setting up his private press at Strawberry Hill; the Herschels—brother and sister—were sweeping the heavens for comets; Reynolds, West, Lawrence, Romney and Gainsborough were founding the first school of British Art; and Hume, the Scotchman, was putting forth arguments irrefutable. And into this seething discontent came Thomas Paine, the weaver, reading, studying, thinking, talking, with nothing to lose but his reputation. He was twenty-seven years of age when he met Ben Franklin, at a coffee-house in London. Paine got his first real mental impetus from Franklin. Both were working men. Paine sat and watched and listened to Franklin one whole evening, and then said, "What he is I can at least in part become" ✍ Paine thought Franklin quite the greatest man of his time, an opinion he never relinquished, and which also, among various others held by Paine, the world has now finally accepted.

AINE at twenty-four, from a simple weaver, had been called into the office of his employer to help straighten out the accounts. He tried store-keeping but with indifferent success. Then it seems he was employed by the Board of Excise on a similar task. Finally he was given a position in the Excise. This position he might have held indefinitely, and been promoted in the work, for he had clerical talents which made his services valuable. But there was another theme that interested him quite as much as collecting taxes for the government, and that was the philosophy of taxation. This was very foolish in Thomas Paine—a tax collector should collect taxes, and not concern himself with the righteousness of the business, nor about what becomes of the money.

Paine had made note of the fact that England collected taxes from Jews but that Jews were not allowed to vote, because they were not "Christians," it being assumed that Jews were neither as fit intellectually or morally to pass on questions of state as members of the "Church". In 1771 in a letter to a local paper he used the phrase, "The iniquity of taxation without representation," referring to England's treatment of

the Quakers. About the same time he called attention to the fact that the Christian religion was built on the Judaic, and that the reputed founder of the established religion was a Jew and his mother a Jewess, and to deprive Jews of the right of full citizenship, simply because they did not take the same view of Jesus that others did was a perversion of the natural rights of man. This expression, "The natural rights of man" gave offense to a certain clergyman of Thetford who replied that man had no natural rights, only privileges, all the rights he had were those granted by the crown. Then followed a debate at the coffee-house followed by a rebuke from Paine's superior officer in the Excise, ordering him to cease all political and religious controversy on penalty.

Paine felt the smart of the rebuke; he thought it was unjustified, in view of the fact that the excellence of his work for the government had never been questioned. So he made a speech in a dissenting chapel explaining the situation. But explanations never explain, and his assertion that the honesty of his service had never been questioned was put out of commission the following week by the charge of smuggling. His name was dropped from the official pay-roll until his case could be tried, and a little later he was peremptorily discharged. The charge against him was not pressed—he was simply not wanted, and the statement by the head exciseman that a man working for

the government should not criticise the government was pretty good logic, anyway. Paine, however, contended that all governments exist for the governed, and with the consent of the governed, and it is the duty of all good citizens to take an interest in their government and if possible show where it can be strengthened and bettered.

It will thus be seen that Paine was forging reasons—his active brain was at work, and his sensitive spirit was writhing under a sense of personal injustice ❧ One of his critics—a clergyman—said that if Thomas Paine wished to preach sedition there was plenty of room to do it outside of England. Paine followed the suggestion, and straightway sought out Franklin to ask him about going to America.

❧ Every idea that Paine had expressed was held by Franklin and had been thought out at length. Franklin was thirty-one years older than Paine, and time had tempered his zeal, and beside that, his tongue was always well under control and when he expressed heresy he seasoned it with a smile and a dash of wit that took the bitterness out of it ❧ Not so Paine—he was an earnest soul, a little lacking in humor, without the adipose which is required for a diplomat.

Franklin's letters of introduction show how he admired the man—what faith he had in him—and it is now believed that Franklin advanced him money, that he might come to America.

William Cobbett says: As my Lord Grenville introduced the name of Burke, suffer me, my Lord, to introduce that of a man who put this Burke to shame, who drove him off the public stage to seek shelter in the pension list, and who is now named fifty million times where the name of the pensioned Burke is mentioned once ✍ The cause of the American Colonies was the cause of the English Constitution, which says that no man shall be taxed without his own consent. A little cause sometimes produces a great effect; an insult offered to a man of great talent and unconquerable perseverance has in many instances produced, in the long run, most tremendous effects; and it appears to me very clear that the inexcusable insults, offered to Mr. Paine while he was in the Excise in England, was the real cause of the Revolution in America; for, though the nature of the cause of America was such as I have before described it; though the principles were firm in the minds of the people of that country; still, it was Mr. Paine, and Mr. Paine alone, who brought those principles into action.

Paine's part in the Revolutionary War was most worthy and honorable. He shouldered a musket with the men at Valley Forge, carried messages by night through the enemy's country, acted as rear guard for Washington's retreating army, and helped at break of day to capture Trenton, and proved his courage in various ways ✍ As clerk, secretary, accountant and financier he did excellent service.

Of course, there had been the usual harmonious discord that will occur among men hard-pressed, over-

worked, where nerve-tension finds vent at times in acrimony. But through all the nine weary years before the British had enough, Paine had never been censured with the same bitterness which had fallen upon the heads of Washington and Jefferson. Even Franklin came in for his share of blame, and it was shown that he expended an even hundred thousand pounds in Europe, with no explanation of what he had done with the money. When called upon to give an accounting for the "yellow dog fund," Franklin simply wrote back, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." And on the suggestion of Thomas Paine the matter was officially dropped.

Paine was a writing man—the very first American writing man—and I am humiliated when I have to acknowledge that we had to get him from England. He was the first man who ever used these words, "The American Nation," and also these, "The United States of America." Paine is the first American writer who had a literary style, and we have not had so many since but that you may count them on the fingers of one hand. Note this sample of antithesis: "There are but two natural sources of wealth—the earth and the ocean,—and to lose the right to either, in our situation, is to put the other up for sale."

Here is a little tribute from Paine's pen to America which some of our boomers of boom towns might do well to use:

America has now outgrown the state of infancy. Her strength and commerce make large advances to manhood; and science in all its branches has not only blossomed, but even ripened upon the soil ❧ The cottages as it were of yesterday have grown into villages, and the villages to cities; and while proud antiquity, like a skeleton in rags, parades the streets of other nations, their genius as if sickened and disgusted with the phantom, comes hither for recovery. America yet inherits a large portion of her first-imported virtue. Degeneracy is here almost a useless word. Those who are conversant with Europe would be tempted to believe that even the air of the Atlantic disagrees with the constitution of foreign vices; if they survive the voyage they either expire on their arrival, or linger away with an incurable consumption. There is a happy something in the climate of America which disarms them of all their power both of infection and attraction.

¶Ease, fluidity, grace, imagination, energy, earnestness, mark his work ❧ No wonder is it that Franklin said, "Others can rule, many can fight, but only Paine can write for us the English tongue." And Jefferson, himself a great writer, was constantly, for many years, sending to Paine manuscript for criticism and correction. In one letter to Paine, Jefferson adds this postscript, "You must not be too much elated and set up when I tell you my belief that you are the only writer in America who can write better than your obliged and obedient servant—Thomas Jefferson."

AINE was living in peace at Bordentown in the year 1787. The war was ended—the last hostile Britisher had departed, and the country was awakening to prosperity. Paine rode his mettlesome old war-horse "Button," back and forth from Philadelphia, often stopping and seating himself by the roadway to write out a thought while the horse that had known the smell of powder quietly nibbled the grass. The success of Benjamin Franklin as an inventor had fired the heart of Paine. He devised a plan to utilize small explosions of gunpowder to run an engine, thus anticipating our gas and gasoline engines by near a hundred years. He had also planned a bridge to span the Schuylkill. Capitalists were ready to build the bridge, provided Paine could get French engineers, then the greatest in the world, to endorse his plans. So he sailed away to France, intending also to visit his parents in England, instructing his friends in Bordentown, with whom he boarded, to take care of his horse, his room and books with all his papers, for he would be back in less than a year. He was fifty years old. It was thirteen years since he had left England, and he felt that his transplantation to a new soil had not

been in vain. England had practically exiled him, but still the land of his birth called, and unseen tendrils tugged at his heart. He must again see England, even for a brief visit, and then back to America, the land that he loved and which he had helped to free.

And destiny devised that it was to be fifteen years before he was again to see his beloved "United States of America."

Arriving in France, Paine was received with great honors ✍ There was much political unrest and the fuse was then being lighted that was to cause the explosion of 1789. However, of all this Paine knew little. He met Danton, a freemason, like himself, and various other radicals. "Common Sense" and "The Crisis" had been translated into French, printed and widely distributed, and inasmuch as Paine had been a party in bringing about one revolution, and had helped carry it through to success, his counsel and advice were sought. A few short weeks in France, and Paine having secured the endorsement of the Academy for his bridge, went over to England preparatory to sailing for America.

Arriving in England, Paine found that his father had died but a short time before ✍ His mother was living, aged ninety-one, and in full possession of her faculties. The meeting of mother and son was full of tender memories ✍ And the mother, while not being able to follow her gifted son in all of his reasoning yet fully

sympathized with him in his efforts to increase human rights. The Quakers, while in favor of peace, are yet revolutionaries, for their policy is one of protest. Paine visited the old Quaker church at Stratford, and there seated in the silence, wrote these words:

¶ When we consider, for the feelings of nature cannot be dismissed, the calamities of war and the miseries it inflicts upon the human species, the thousands and tens of thousands, of every age and sex who are rendered wretched by the event, surely there is something in the heart of man that calls upon him to think! Surely there is some tender chord, tuned by the hand of the Creator, that still struggles to emit in the hearing of the soul a note of sorrowing sympathy ❧ Let it then be heard, and let man learn to feel that the true greatness of a nation is founded on principles of humanity, and not on conquest ❧ War involves in its progress such a train of unforeseen and unsupposed circumstances, such a combination of foreign matters, that no human wisdom can calculate the end. It has but one thing certain, and that is to increase taxes ❧ I defend the cause of the poor, of the manufacturer, of the tradesman, of the farmer, and of all those on whom the real burthen of taxes fall—but above all, I defend the cause of women and children—of all humanity ❧

Edmund Burke hearing of Paine's presence in England, sent for him to come to his house. Paine accepted the invitation, and Burke doubtless got a few interesting chapters of history at first hand. "It was equal to meeting Washington and perhaps better, for Paine

is more of a philosopher than his chief," wrote Burke to the elder Pitt.

Paine saw that political unrest was not confined to France—that England was in a state of evolution, and was making painful efforts to adapt herself to the progress of the times ❧ Paine could remember a time when in England women and children were hanged for poaching; when the insane were publicly whipped, and when, if publicly expressed, a doubt concerning the truth of scripture meant exile or to have your ears cut off ❧ ❧

Now he saw the old custom reversed and the nobles were bowing to the will of the people. It came to him that if the many in England could be educated, the Crown having so recently received its rebuke at the hands of the American Colonies, that a great stride to the front could be made ❧ Englishmen were talking about their rights. What are the natural rights of a man? He began to set down his thoughts on the subject. These soon extended themselves into chapters. The chapters grew into a book—a book which he hoped would peacefully do for England what "Common Sense" had done for America. This book, "The Rights of Man," was written at the same time that Mary Wollstonecraft was writing her book, "The Rights of Women" ❧ ❧

In London, Paine made his home at the house of Thomas Rickman, a publisher. Rickman has given us

an intimate glimpse into the life of the patriot, and told us among other things that Paine was five feet ten inches high, of an athletic build, and very fond of taking long walks. Among the visitors at Rickman's house who came to see Paine were Dr. Priestly, Horne Tooke, Romney, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the Duke of Portland and Mary Wollstonecraft. It seems very probable that Mrs. Wollstonecraft read to Paine parts of her book, for very much in his volume parallels hers, not only in the thought but in actual wording. Whether he got more ideas from her than she got from him, will have to be left to the higher critics ☙ Certain it is that they were in mutual accord, and that Mrs. Wollstonecraft had read "Common Sense" and "The Rights of Man" to a purpose.

It was too much to expect that a native born Englishman could go across the sea to British Colonies and rebel against British rule and then come back to England and escape censure. The very popularity of Paine in certain high circles centered attention on him. And Pitt, who certainly admired Paine's talents, referred to his stay in England as "indelicate."

England is the freest country on earth. It is her rule to let her orators unmuzzle their ignorance and find relief in venting grievances upon the empty air. In Hyde Park any Sunday one can hear the same sentiments for the suppression of which Chicago paid in her Haymarket massacre ☙ Grievances expressed are

half cured, but England did not think so then ✍ The change came about through a thirty years' fight, which Paine precipitated.

The patience of England in dealing with Paine was extraordinary. Paine was right, but at the same time he was as guilty as Theodore Parker was when indicted by the State of Virginia along with Ol' John Brown ✍ ✍

"The Rights of Man" sold from the very start, and in a year fifty thousand copies had been called for ✍ Unlike his other books this one was bringing Paine a financial return. Newspaper controversies followed, and Burke the radical, found himself unable to go the lengths to which Paine was logically trying to force him ✍ ✍

Paine was in Paris, on a visit, on that memorable day which saw the fall of the Bastille. Jefferson and Adams had left France and Paine was regarded as the authorized representative of America, and in fact he had been doing business in France for Washington. Lafayette in a moment of exultant enthusiasm gave the key of the Bastille to Paine to present to Washington, and as every American schoolboy knows, this famous key to a sad situation now hangs on its carefully guarded peg at Mt. Vernon ✍ Lafayette thought that without the example of America, France would never have found strength to throw off the rule of kings, and so America must have the key to the detested door

that was now unhinged forever. "And to me," said Lafayette, "America without her Thomas Paine is unthinkable" ❧ The words were carried to England and there did Paine no especial good ❧ But England was now giving Paine a living—there was a market for the product of his pen—and he was being advertised both by his loving friends and his rabid enemies.

¶ Paine had many admirers in France, and in some ways he felt more at home there than in England. He spoke and wrote French. However, no man ever wrote well in more than one language although he might speak intelligently in several; and the orator using a foreign tongue never reaches fluidity. "Where liberty is there is my home," said Franklin. And Paine answered, "Where liberty is not, there is my home."

The newspaper attacks had shown Paine that he had not made himself clear on all points, and like every worthy orator who considers, when too late, all the great things he intended to say, he was stung with the thought of all the brilliant things he might have said, but had not.

And so straightway he began to prepare Part II. of "The Rights of Man." The book was printed in cheap form similar to "Common Sense," and was beginning to be widely read by working men.

"Philosophy is all right," said Pitt, but it should be taught to philosophical people. If this thing is kept up London will re-enact the scenes of Paris."

Many Englishman thought the same. The official order was given, and all of Paine's books that could be found were seized and publicly used for a bonfire by the official hangman. Paine was burned in effigy in many cities, the charge being made that he was one of the men who had brought about the French Revolution. With better truth it could have been stated that he was the man, with the help of George III., who brought about the American Revolution. The terms of peace made between England and the Colonies granted amnesty to Paine and his colleagues in rebellion, but his acts could not be forgotten, even though they were nominally forgiven. This new firebrand of a book was really too much, and the author got a left-handed compliment from the Premier on his literary style—books to burn!

Three French provinces nominated him to represent them in the Chamber of Deputies. He accepted the solicitations of Calais, and took his seat for that province.

He knew Danton, Mirabeau, Marat and Robespierre. Danton and Robespierre respected him and often advised with him. Mirabeau and Marat were in turn suspicious and afraid of him. The times were feverish, and Paine, a radical at heart, here was regarded as a conservative. In America the enemy stood out to be counted; the division was clear and sharp, but here the danger was in the hearts of the French themselves.

¶ Paine argued that of all things we must conquer our own spirits, and in this new birth of freedom not imitate the cruelty and harshness of royalty against which we protest. "We will kill the king, but not the man," were his words. But with all of his tact and logic he could not make his colleagues see that to abolish the kingly office, not to kill the individual, was the thing desired.

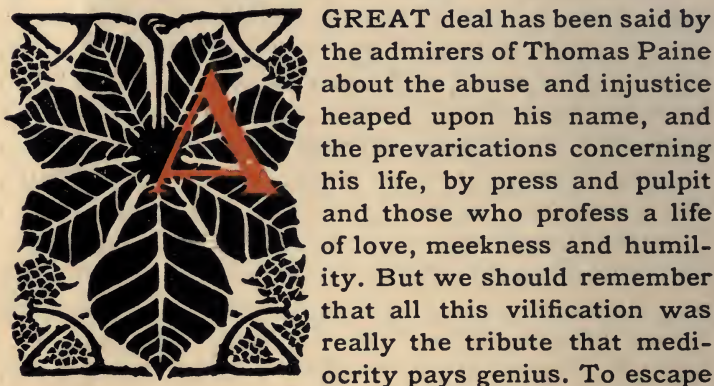
So Louis, who helped free the American colonies, went to the block, and his enemy, Danton, a little later, did the same. Mirabeau, the boaster, had died peacefully in his bed; Robespierre, who signed the death warrant of Paine, "to save his own head," died the death he had reserved for Paine; Marat, "the terrible dwarf," horribly honest, fearfully sincere, jealous and afraid of Paine, hinting that he was the secret emissary of England, was stabbed to his death by a woman's hand.

And amid the din, escape being impossible, and also undesirable, Thomas Paine wrote the first part of the "Age of Reason."

The second part was written in the Luxembourg prison, under the shadow of the guillotine. But life is only a sentence of death, with an indefinite reprieve. Prison, to Paine, was not all gloom.

The jailer, Benoit, was good-natured and cherished his unwilling guests as his children ❧ When they left for freedom or for death, he kissed them, and gave

each a little ring in which was engraved the single word, "Mizpah." But finally Benoit, himself, was led away, and there was none to kiss his cheek, nor to give him a ring and cry cheerily, "Good luck, Citizen Comrade! Until we meet again!"



A GREAT deal has been said by the admirers of Thomas Paine about the abuse and injustice heaped upon his name, and the prevarications concerning his life, by press and pulpit and those who profess a life of love, meekness and humility. But we should remember that all this vilification was really the tribute that mediocrity pays genius. To escape censure one only has to move with the mob, think with the mob, do nothing that the mob does not do—then you are safe. The saviors of the world have usually been crucified between thieves, despised, forsaken, spit upon, rejected of men. In their lives they seldom had a place where they could safely lay their weary heads, and dying their bodies were either hidden in another man's tomb or else subjected to the indignities which the living man failed to survive:

torn limb from limb, eyeless, headless, armless, burned and the ashes scattered or sunk in the sea.

And the peculiar thing is that most of this frightful inhumanity was the work of so-called good men, the pillars of society, the respectable element, what we are pleased to call "our first citizens," instigated by the Church that happened to be power. Socrates poisoned, Aristides ostracized, Aristotle fleeing for his life, Jesus crucified, Paul beheaded, Peter crucified head downward, Savonarola martryred, Spinoza hunted, tracked and cursed, and an order issued that no man should speak to him nor supply him food or shelter, Bruno burned, Galileo imprisoned, Huss, Wyclif, Latimer and Tyndale used for kindling—all this in the name of religion, institutional religion, the one thing that has caused more misery, heartaches, bloodshed, war, than all other causes combined. Leo Tolstoy says, "Love, truth, compassion, service, sympathy, tenderness exist in the hearts of men, and are the essence of religion, but try to encompass these things in an institution and you get a church—and the Church stands for and has always stood for coercion, intolerance, injustice and cruelty."

No man ever lifted up his voice or pen in a criticism against love, truth, compassion, service, sympathy and tenderness & And if he had, do you think that love, truth, compassion, service, sympathy, tenderness would feel it necessary to go after him with stocks,

chains, thumbscrews and torches? ¶ You cannot imagine it.

Then what is it goes after men who criticize the prevailing religion and show where it can be improved upon? Why, it is hate, malice, vengeance, jealousy, injustice, intolerance, cruelty, fear.

The reason the church does not visit upon its critics today the same cruelties that it did three hundred years ago is simply because it has not the power ❧ Incorporate a beautiful sentiment and hire a man to preach and defend it, and then buy property and build costly buildings in which to preach your beautiful sentiment, and if the gentleman who preaches your beautiful sentiment is criticized he will fight and suppress his critics if he can. And the reason he fights his critics is not because he believes the beautiful sentiment will suffer, but because he fears losing his position which carries with it ease, honors and food, and a parsonage and a church, taxes free.

Just as soon as the gentleman employed to defend and preach the beautiful sentiment grows fearful about the permanency of his position, and begins to have gooseflesh when a critic's name is mentioned, the beautiful sentiment evaporates out of the window, and exists only in that place forever as a name ❧ The church is ever a menace to all beautiful sentiments, because it is an economic institution, and the chief distributor of degrees, titles and honors.

Anything that threatens to curtail its power it is bound to oppose and suppress, if it can. Men who cease useful work in order to devote themselves to religion, are right in the same class with women who quit work to make a business of love. Men who know history and humanity and have reasonably open minds are not surprised at the treatment visited upon Paine by the country he had so much benefited ❧ Superstition and hallucination are really one thing, and fanaticism, which is mental obsession, easily becomes acute and the whirling dervish runs amuck at sight of a man whose religious opinions are different from his own ❧ ¶ Paine got off very easy; he lived his life, and expressed himself freely to the last. Men who discover continents are destined to die in chains. That is the price they pay for the privilege of sailing on, and on, and on, and on.

Said Paine: The moral duty of a man consists in imitating the moral goodness and beneficence of God manifested in the creation towards all creatures. That seeing as we daily do, the goodness of God to all men, it is an example calling upon all men to practice towards each other, and consequently that everything of persecution and revenge between man and man, and everything of cruelty to animals is a violation of moral duty.

HE pen of Paine made the sword of Washington possible ✍ And as Paine's book, "Common Sense," broke the power of Great Britain in America, and the "Rights of Man" gave free speech and a free press to England, so did the "Age of Reason" give pause to the juggernaut of orthodoxy ✍ Thomas Paine was the legitimate ancestor of Hosea Ballou who founded the Universalist church, and also of Theodore Parker who made Unitarianism in America an intellectual torch.

Channing, Ripley, Bartol, Martineau, Frothingham, Hale, Curtis, Collyer, Swing, Thomas, Conway, Leonard, Savage, Crapsey, yes—even Emerson and Thoreau, were spiritual children, all, of Thomas Paine. He blazed the way and made it possible for men to preach the sweet reasonableness of reason. He was the pioneer in a jungle of superstition. Thomas Paine was the real founder of the so-called Liberal Denominations and the business of the liberal denominations has not been to become great, powerful and popular, but to make all other denominations more liberal. So today in all so-called orthodox pulpits one can hear the ideas of Paine, Henry Frank & B. Fay Mills expounded.

Two Rogues in Buckram Relieve their Minds

Number 1.—Ed. Howe in "Atchison (Kansas) Daily Globe" of March 4, 1907.

A SECOND-RATE GENIUS. Elbert Hubbard, editor of "The Philistine," at East Aurora, New York, is a second-rate genius, which is high praise, for there never was a first-rate genius, excepting a dead one. Only death can grant the superior degree, for to live is to most people more or less of an offense. Hubbard writes a great deal, and naturally he cannot always write well, but if the good things he has written could be collected, the result would be a book a hundred times larger than the good writing Charles Lamb has handed down to posterity. And the "Atlantic Monthly" never appears without a reference to Charles Lamb. We suppose that it must be admitted that Dickens and Shakespeare were first-class geniuses, but in originality and force, Hubbard is entitled to a place among the second raters below them. There is so much envy and meanness among the living that Hubbard will not be fairly rated until he has been dead fifty years.

Hubbard is original in what he says and does; his Roycroft Shop may be an old idea, but his writings suggest no one. Hubbard does not pretend to be a saint; he is perfectly natural, as any really sensible man must be, and those who do not like a natural, sensible man are at liberty to hate him, which a good many do, with extreme cordiality. But all those who hate him are unfair, if they deny he is a genius. Being only a second rater, of course Hubbard makes mistakes. For example, we notice, in the list of books issued at his shop, one listed at two hundred and fifty dollars per copy: "Thoreau's Friendship;" a tall copy on genuine vellum, with forty free-hand drawings." Think of the absurdity of issuing a book which sells for two hundred and fifty dollars per copy! Now that Hubbard has won his battles, and attracted the world's attention in spite of unfair opposition, he should print books at ten cents each, instead of two hundred and fifty dollars each; books of real value to the common people, and which can be understood by them. Hubbard's own booklet, "A Message to Garcia," was printed in this manner, and did much to encourage the good

workman, the simple, honest, capable man. Millions of copies of this booklet have been sold, and because of its wide circulation, the race has been benefited; the people are hungry for common sense, for information told in a simple and convincing way.

* * *

Number 2.—By Leigh Mitchell Hodges. From the Philadelphia "North American" of April 10, 1907.

COMES once a year to Philadelphia, to speak his mind on many matters, the greatest of modern epigrammists—Elbert Hubbard.

He is a philosopher from Philistia, who wages a wordy war against the ruts into which the chariot of civilization has slid on the road to Progress. He jests at the frailties of the law, makes merry with medicine, and rains ridicule upon orthodox religion, etherizing his every shaft with a smile. With a deftness as delightful as rare, he plays on the high chords of history the variant tunes of time and change.

Unlike most image-breakers that have come and gone, he has something to offer for what he would take away. He does n't remove the roof and then seek to convince men that rain is good for the furniture! With choice-told tales of fact and fancy he leads his listeners through lanes of logic and love to the home of his prime ideal—a simple state wherein men and women will get by giving; just doing the best they can and being kind.

* * *

HIS "MESSAGE TO GARCIA." He is revered and hated. He is easily the prince of present-day thought-provokers. His classic "Message to Garcia" has, in nine years, found its way into more than a score of languages and reached a circulation of twenty-five million copies. His point of view, penned sometimes on trains, more often on an old flat-topped desk in the Roycroft Shop in East Aurora, penetrates to the remotest corners of the earth, giving birth to a strange chorus of mingled praise and denunciation.

His "Little Journeys" are used as textbooks in many schools, while copies of his frank monthly magazine, bound in butcher's paper, have been removed from more than one center table with the aid of

fire-tongs. ¶ Comes this man, gentle as Wordsworth and caustic as Whistler; a Johnson in retort and the Boswell of human nature; a sworn foe to pretense in its every guise and above all, a coiner of pithy truthlets, to say JUST what he thinks in spite of what any one else thinks, and to give us a close view of a really great personality, curious as it is in some of its myriad phases.

* * *

WILL GO DOWN TO FAME. For Elbert Hubbard is a big man, though some of him will die, enough will be left to secure him a lower berth on the Fame Limited, which left the valley of the Euphrates some time ago and slows up every little while to take on a through passenger. And free passes don't go on this train!

Yes, Hubbard is a great man—hundreds of persons were turned away from Horticultural Hall when he lectured there last Thursday evening—and there's hardly a business office of any sort in all the length and breadth of this land in which one or more of his striking sayings is not to be found pasted on a desk drawer, or stuck in a picture frame, or given a frame all its own and hung where you can't help seeing it.

And it is the "folly of precepts" mentioned above that furnishes the Fra most of his food for thought and comment. The mere sight of some one doing something because some one else did something—this produces a brainstorm of protest behind that hirsute fringe of his, and pretty soon thereafter the world catches an echo or two of the thunder * * *

It is this attitude that fathers his constant attacks on the foolish forms and conventions of what is miscalled "eminently respectable" society; his vitriolic dashes at the ossified parts of orthodoxy, which he chooses to call a "Juggernaut, spinning down through the centuries, crushing, mingling, smashing everything before it."

If heresy were a lay-crime, the Day of Judgment would have to be postponed to provide time for his trial.

* * *

HUBBARD'S CREED. But, as I said in the beginning, he has something definite to offer for what he would obliterate. He rails at creeds, and then comes out with his own, which is this:

"I believe that no one can harm us but ourselves; that sin is misdirected energy; that there is no devil but fear, and that the Universe is planned for good. I believe that work is a blessing; that winter is as necessary as summer; that night is as useful as day; that Death is a manifestation of Life, and just as good. I believe in the Now and Here. I believe in You, and I believe in a Power that is in Ourselves that makes for Righteousness."

In this is crystallized what may be regarded as the modern spirit of revolutionary religion, yet curiously enough it is the sincere declaration of a man who said last Thursday evening that he believed the world was really getting ready to do what it should—to practice the religion of Jesus Christ.

He has written a life of Christ, "The Man of Sorrows," he calls it, and it has been so well advertised by his enemies that next to "The Message," it is probably the best-selling of his many books. There is scarcely a man or woman in history of whom he has not written uniquely and interestingly. His "Little Journeys" will last as long and as well as "Plutarch's Lives," and they will be off the bookshelf more of the time.

HERE IS HIS FAREWELL TO THE LATE ERNEST HOWARD CROSBY. He calls it a love letter, and unless I miss my guess, he graved it on the granite of time with his Falcon, No. 2:

Dear Ernest: You and I were born the same year. When we climbed a mountain a short time ago, with Ol' John Burroughs, you in playful mood told Ol' John that you expected to preach his funeral sermon. And Ol' John, in love, replied that he hoped and expected to do as much for both of us.

And now men say that you are dead. But you are not dead to me, nor to Ol' John, nor to all of the many men and women and children who knew and loved you well; for those who knew you loved you, and those who did not love you did not know you.

I think of you now, as I thought of you while you were with us, as quite the manliest man I ever saw. Your scorned military experience saved you from the scholar's stoop; and yours was ever a skyey gravitation. Your towering form & martial ways caused the Egyptian fellahs at Cairo to turn and say:

"There goes the King of America!" ¶ Yet you were not a king, save of your own spirit, for you loved men too well to wish to rule them. Your prophetic soul foresaw a time when humanity would be free—free from the mesh of entanglement woven by centuries of selfishness, serfdom and misrule—and you, of all men, knew that freedom comes through giving freedom. You have left the world better than you found it, and made your impress on the times.

Yet you never really had a chance in life, being born into the conventions, of a family eminently respectable, in a great city, and heir to wealth, position and educational advantages. Disadvantages, poverty, disappointment and grief might have made you a Messiah—a man whom men confuse with Deity incarnate.

Your unswerving honesty, your purity of motive, your cleanly, abstemious life—eating no meat, drinking neither tea nor coffee, never touching tobacco nor strong drink, yet never censuring those whose lives differed from your own—made you as one set apart. However, you were never prudish, for nothing that was human was alien to you. In great degree you overcame the handicap of birth, breaking many of your fetters, and never wearing your chains as jewelry.

Your name will live with that trinity of prophets and seers—your own Tolstoy, Walt Whitman and Henry Thoreau—as one who blessed and benefited the world, exercising fear, banishing doubt and filling our day-dreams with hope, faith, courage and love. You were a sample of the twenty-fifth century, sent by the Supreme Intelligence for the encouragement of this.

And now, as you fare forth into the Unknown, I salute you and write this line, trying to tell you how very precious to me is the memory of your friendship, and that, though dead, you still live in minds made better. So farewell and farewell!

* * *

YOU AND I DO NOT HAVE TO DECIDE whether this man Hubbard is right or wrong. Time is kind enough to relieve us of that task, and Time has hitherto had a way of reversing the judgment of the lower courts of contemporaniety. He is a natural product of the times and nature produces nothing without cause or reason.

That he is overcoming some part of the proverbial burden of the prophet is evidenced right here in this most conventional and orthodox of communities. Three winters ago the best he could do was to hire St. James' Hall at fifteen per, and even then he had to ask his audience to move down front so that his words would n't trip on vacant seats. Next year he 'll rent the Academy.

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